(b) Since the initiation of the process of globalization and economic liberalization, some employment opportunities in the older type of enterprises might have been reduced due to declining efficiency but at the same time new employment opportunities are created in a number of new areas such as IT, Tourism, Financial Services etc.

(c) A target of creation of around 5 crore employment opportunities was fixed for the 10th Plan period. Out of these, nearly 3 crore employment opportunities will come from the normal growth of the economy assuming 8% per annum growth of Gross Domestic Product and remaining two crore will come from special employment generation programmes.

Trade Union rights to IT sector employees

373. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether large number of people are employed in the Information Technology (IT) enterprises, namely Call Centres, BPOs, Software Development etc.;

(b) the State-wise details of such enterprises and number of persons employed therein, year-wise for the last three years, indicating their percentage *vis-à-vis* total workforce;

(c) whether the extant labour law/rules restrain the employees in IT sector from enjoying Trade Union (TU) rights;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Government are contemplating steps to facilitate exercising of TU rights by IT sector employees in the country;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU): (a) As per National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM), employment in the Information Technology Services and Information Technology Enabled Services-BPO sector was 613000 in 2004-05.

(b) The ITES-BPO enterprises fall under the State Sphere. Hence, this kind of information is not centrally maintained.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The Trade Unions Act, 1926 is applicable to IT Sector employees in the country.

(f) and (g) Do not arise.

Rate of Interest on EPF and PPF

374. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the rate of interest on EPF for 2005-06 has been fixed at 8.5 per cent p.a.;

(b) if so, the rate of interest fixed for PPF;

(c) why there is difference in the rate of interest in these two categories of provident funds; and

(d) the steps being taken to reduce administrative expenditure on EPF?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government has notified the rate of interest for the year 2005-06 @ 8.5%.

(b) The rate of interest on PPF was fixed at 8.0% for the year 2003-04 and since then the same rate of interest is being continued for the Financial Year 2004-05 and 2005-06.

(c) The two schemes are different in terms of the subscriber base, mechanism for deployment of proceeds, housing of the funds, payments to subscribers and risks associated therewith.

(d) All administrative expenditure is incurred judiciously in accordance with the instructions issued by the government from time to time and by observing standards of financial proprietary.

Rate of Interest on EPF

375. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had finally decided to reduce the rate of interest on Employees Provident Fund (EPF) from 9.5 per cent to 8.5 per cent for